

## **Region 3 GPRA Baseline RCRA Corrective Action Facility**

# **Expert Management, Inc. (Formerly ICI Explosives USA, Inc.)**

**Rt 443 West Off Route 309**

**Tamaqua, PA 18252**

**Congressional District 6**

**EPA ID #: PAD071203046**

**Latest Update 12/27/2002**

## **Current Progress at the Site**

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Located in the mountains of Schuylkill County, near Tamaqua, Pennsylvania, this property has made significant progress towards clean-up. EPA is approaching this clean-up with an eye toward partnership with the state regulatory programs and the property owners, Expert Management Inc. (EMI), in an effort to reduce administrative burdens on all parties.

EMI notified Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and EPA Region III (EPA) that they will voluntarily remediate the property. Currently, EPA does not have a binding agreement (permit or administrative order) with EMI for corrective action activities. The facility is aware of its closure and corrective action obligations under RCRA and HSWA and has structured its clean-up activities to satisfy these requirements. In July 1997, EPA began providing technical assistance to the facility, with the idea the clean-up could meet corrective action and public involvement obligations without EPA issuing an administrative order; thus eliminating unnecessary administrative burden and time delays.

EMI intends to sell the entire property. ICI Explosives USA Inc., predecessor to EMI, divided the site into a number of parcels for the purposes of investigation, remediation and sale. Two parcels have been remediated and sold. The remaining third parcel is still owned by EMI. Investigation and clean-up reports for this parcel are being reviewed by EPA and PADEP.

The first parcel, 660 acres referred to as the Corona area, has been investigated and remediated, and the area has been sold to Copperhead Chemical Company Inc.(CCCI). EPA has determined that corrective action obligations have been met at this parcel and intends to public notice this decision in the near future. PADEP has determined that the clean-up has met RCRA closure and Act 2 requirements. In September, 1998, PADEP granted ICI Explosives liability protection under Act 2.

Copperhead Chemical Company, Inc. has also purchased a 220-acre parcel adjoining the Corona parcel, called the Wakefield Property. It has likewise undergone investigation and remediation. Low levels of lead, mercury, arsenic, and organics in the soil, as well as lead in the groundwater

remain as a possible concern. EPA has determined that remediation activities required by PADEP under its RCRA closure and Act 2 programs will satisfy corrective action obligations, therefore EPA will not require additional clean-up at this parcel. EPA will public notice this decision in the near future. PADEP has determined that the clean-up has met RCRA closure and Act 2 requirements. In January, 2002, PADEP granted ICI Explosives liability protection under Act 2.

EMI has investigated and nearly completed active remediation at its remaining three hundred forty acre parcel, also known as Riverdale. Historic waste disposal and burning occurred at this property and groundwater impacts were noted during the investigation. Investigation began in the late 1980's, and a massive excavation and removal project (approximately 20,000 tons of soils and waste in 6 weeks) was completed in 1999. EPA is currently reviewing investigation and remediation reports. Closure plans and certifications for the RCRA regulated units have been submitted to and are under review by PADEP. EMI does not intend to seek an Act 2 release for this remaining three hundred forty acre parcel.

The facility conducted quarterly groundwater monitoring at the Riverdale parcel between 1992 and 2001. Low levels of organics, lead, and nitrates have been found in the groundwater, but not in the adjacent river. Neither the groundwater nor the river is not used as a drinking water source. The nitrate level in the groundwater is above the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) level, which triggers additional investigation. The MCL values are conservative levels based on water being used as a drinking water source. A site-specific risk evaluation of the nitrate level in the groundwater and its affect on possible receptors, in this case, the organisms in the river, was performed by the facility. The current levels of nitrates in the groundwater were shown to not have an impact on the river receptors. The facility proposed an Alternate Concentration Level (ACL) for nitrate in groundwater, based on a level safe for the river. PADEP approved the ACL in the spring of 2001. Groundwater monitoring data shows that the groundwater has met the ACL level for eight consecutive quarters and the concentration continues to decrease. Subsequently, PADEP approved ending the groundwater and surface water monitoring at the Riverdale parcel.

In September, 2001, EPA determined that the Human Health exposures were controlled at the site. The EI evaluation took into account the soils investigation and removal, as well as the current use of the site.

## **Site Description**

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The property has been used for explosives manufacturing since 1907 when the Potts Powder Company started operations to support the commercial coal industry in the region. In 1913 Atlas Powder Company purchased the operations and continued manufacturing. In 1971, ICI Americas, Inc purchased Atlas Powder Company and sold off most of the manufacturing operations in 1973 (the sold assets are what eventually would become EMI). ICI Americas repurchased the same Atlas Powder Company assets in 1990 and renamed the facility ICI Explosives USA Inc. in 1992. The explosives manufacturing operations ceased in the mid-1990s. During major military efforts of the U.S. Government, this facility provided support; converting from commercial to military production for WWII, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War.

In 2001, ICI Explosives USA Inc. changed its name to E-One Holdings Inc. and divested this property to a new subsidiary, Expert Management Inc. In December 2002, EMI became a wholly owned subsidiary of ICI Americas Inc., and is no longer associated with E-One Holdings Inc. EMI has been looking to sell the property.

## **Site Responsibility**

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RCRA Corrective Action activities at the EMI Facility are being conducted as a joint lead by EPA and PADEP. The investigation and any necessary clean up activities are being implemented in accordance with Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program, PADEP's Land Recycling Program, and EPA's Corrective Action program goals. For further details concerning the coordination of these programs at this facility, please refer to the "Current Progress at the Site" section.

## **Contaminants**

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The primary contaminants of concern at this site are: lead, mercury, arsenic, and volatile organic compounds, such as trichloroethylene (TCE), and perchloroethylene.

## **Community Interaction**

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The local municipalities and elected representatives have been involved in the redevelopment of the property from the out-set. The site is listed as a Keystone Opportunity Zone, an incentive program which allows for tax breaks for new owners of the property.

All reports submitted under the Act 2 program must be submitted to the local municipality. Public notification of Act 2 remediation actions were also provided in the Lehigh Valley Times-News. Public notice of the approval of closure plans for RCRA regulated units is provided in the newspaper at the time of approval. EPA is planning to provide public notice and an opportunity to comment on our remediation decisions at the same time for the entire site.

## **Government Contacts**

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For more information about EPA's corrective action webpage, including Environmental Indicators, please visit our site at: [www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm](http://www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm)

## Facility Contact

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